(b) to (d) Do not arise. However, National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) has been taking necessary steps to prevent leakage of gas in the Smelter Plant by installing high efficient fume treatment plant with dry scrubbing system which collects the gases and particular fluoride evolving from the pots of the smelter. The emission from the plant is regularly monitored by the Company and the State Pollution Control Board.

Identification of potential sites for iron-ore

164. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified potential sites of iron-ore in the country to increase domestic steel production; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) As per the information provided by Ministry of Steel, no exercise is underway for identification of sites for iron-ore in the country to increase the domestic steel production.

(b) Does not arise.

Discovery of Platinum

165. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that traces of platinum have been discovered by the Ferro Alloys Corporation Ltd. (FACOR) at Bhadrak chrome ore mine in Orissa;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that this is the first time platinum has been found anywhere in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) No, Sir. The discovery of Platinum Group of Elements (PGE) has been made by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in the Buola Chromite Mine of M/s. Ferro Alloys Corporation Ltd. (FACOR) and not in Bhadrak Chrome Ore Mines, in the year 1986-87.

(b) No, Sir. GSI has found occurrences of PGM in other areas of the country also.

(c) Other potential areas identified by GSI are in Jojohatu, Gorumahisani greenstone belt and Singhabhum shear zone in Jharkhand, Katpal-Birasal sector in Orissa, Kondapalli-Gangineni, Chimakurti, Chimalpad complex in Andhra Pradesh, Sinduvalli Taluk-Channagiri, Tavarekere-Mayanikere-Megyathali areas in Karnataka, Sittampudi comolex in Tamil Nadu, Karhiya ultramafic in Madhya Pradesh, Kankuli-Vagda-Pauni-Bhimsain-Killapahar areas of Maharashtra, Indus Ophilite Belt in Jammu & Kashmir, Sung Valley in Meghalaya, Dibang Valley, Tidding in Arunachal Pradesh and ophiolites of Manipur-Nagaland.

Slope stabilisation at Kudremukh

166. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has sought the inclusion of an Expert on slope stabilisation at Kudremukh mine area, in the recently constituted monitoring committee on the closure of KIOCL mines;

(b) if so, whether slope stabilisation, if recommended by the expert Committee would mean continuation of excavation of unbroken areas of around 100 hectares; and

(c) if so, how long this stop stabilisation process of excavating unbroken areas would last?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) As per the information given by Ministry of Environment and Forest, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has not sought the inclusion of any expert on slope stabilisation at Kudremukh mine area in the Monitoring Committee constituted to monitor the implementation of the rehabilitation plans. However, *vide* their order dated 20.1.2006, the Hon'ble Court has directed that the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) shall examine and assist the Hon'ble Court on nominating an Expert Body to report on the closure of Kudremukh mine in general and particularly on the issue of slope stability. The CEC has filed its report with its suggestions on constitution of an Expert Body in pursuance of the directions given by the Hon'ble Court. The Expert Body is yet to be constituted.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.